

Report of the Strategic Implementation Team (SIT) Chair

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE

Herewith the SIT Chair, Dr. Tillmann Mohr, provides an update on SIT activities during 2003.

ACTION PROPOSED

The meeting is invited to take note of the information contained in this document.

REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF SIT FOR 2003

Two meetings of SIT have been held since the 16th CEOS Plenary; one in Geneva on 4/5 February, 2003, (SIT 11) and the second in Darmstadt on 14/15 October, 2003, (SIT 12). Both meetings concentrated on assisting the IGOS-P Theme Teams in the preparation of their reports to Partners.

IGOS-P Themes

SIT 12 considered the three theme reports (Global Carbon, Global Water cycle and Geo-hazards) to be presented to IGOS-P-10bis for approval. Although the reports were not in their final form, in every case SIT was able to consider an advanced draft sufficient for SIT participants to formulate a view.

SIT advice to the three Team Leaders is contained in the record of the SIT 12 meeting, relevant extracts of which are now attached. These comments and guidance have been conveyed directly to the Team Leaders with a view to their being taken into account in time for the IGOS-P-10bis meeting. This information will be presented at the IGOS-P10bis when the approval of the three Themes comes to be discussed. In addition, the opportunity will be taken to say how impressed SIT was with the progress which teams had made, and the high quality of the work.

From contact with other Theme Team Leaders, SIT has noted that a SIT meeting will be required early in 2004, and dates for this will be arranged in due course in consultation with the Themes concerned.

Chairmanship

Dr Mohr indicated to SIT 12 that his term of office would be ending immediately after the 17th CEOS Plenary, and Dr Yoji Furuhashi, presently Vice-Chairman, indicated that, in accordance with past practice, he would be able to take over the chairmanship from Dr. Mohr. Professor Jose Achache has been approached to replace Dr Furuhashi as the Vice-Chairman.

12th SIT Meeting

14-15 October, 2003, EUMETSAT, Darmstadt

Relevant Extracts from the minutes

ITEM 4 Global Carbon Theme

1. The Chairman explained that neither Dr. Berrien Moore nor Dr Philippe Ciais had been able to attend the SIT meeting and that Dr Williams would briefly introduce the draft theme report. Dr Williams then took the meeting through the main elements of the report, concentrating on the satellite observation requirements and the implementation arrangements
2. There was unanimous agreement that SIT should congratulate the Team Leaders and all who have contributed to preparing this excellent report. As a result of the subsequent discussion SIT had one important qualification in the implementation arrangements as proposed in the report, as well as some specific points in the body of the report.
3. On implementation SIT appreciated that the extremely complicated nature of this consolidated Theme made it difficult at this stage for this report to be as precise as the IGOS-P Process Paper requires. However, it was noted that, whilst the draft report refers to phases for the implementation, there were no specific proposals for the entities and individuals who will participate in the implementation. Whilst the “team” can be flexible and develop with time, it is important to identify an initial group and leader.
4. On this issue, and given the high quality of the report and the wealth of information it contains, SIT will propose that the IGOS-P approve the theme report at their special meeting in November 2003, which, in respect of leadership, is a slight derogation from the standard implementation requirements of the Process Paper.
5. SIT urged the Team Leaders to prepare a specific statement on who will be involved in the implementation for a first discussion at the special November IGOS-P meeting, and for formal agreement at the IGOS-P meeting 11 in May 2004. (SIT took note of several suggestions for initial responsibility, including IGBP.)
6. Turning to specific comments, the first was that it would be helpful if the in-situ requirements and capabilities could also be shown in table form, in the same way they are shown for space observations.
7. The status of modeling aspects was felt to require more attention.
8. The tasks identified in the report are of different natures – build a new satellite, hold a workshop, development of new products etc. As soon as possible, the specific actions should be identified.
9. It would be helpful to be able to map from the tables (including those for in-situ requirements) to the implementation actions and responsibilities.
10. On an editorial point, remaining references to “global carbon observing system” (eg Figure 22) should be deleted.

11. In conclusion, SIT, on behalf of CEOS, will make the above recommendations to the special November IGOS-P meeting. and transmit them straightaway to the IGCO Theme Leaders, who had been unable to attend the SIT meeting, with a view to the SIT recommendations being taken into account in their presentation of the Theme Report. (Action 12/1)

Item 5 Global Water Cycle Theme

12. The Chairman invited Dr. Richard Lawford to present the Global Water Cycle Theme report.
13. There was unanimous agreement that the team had done an excellent job, and that SIT should support approval of the Theme report when it is considered at IGOS-P-10bis. Points raised in the discussion touched implementation as well as a few specific points in the body of the text. These are summarized below.
14. On implementation it was agreed in principle to support the proposal that the co-leaders for implementation should be WCRP and the two most concerned Directors (Hydrography and WWW) from the WMO. It would be good to strengthen the executive elements in the proposed “chain of command” and to distinguish more clearly between advisory and executive bodies.
15. On specific points, the first was that it would be good to have an additional recommendation on maintaining the ground network of observations, which is under threat of reduction due to financial pressures.
16. It needs to be emphasized that this cannot be solely a research programme; the operational component is extremely important.
17. The socio-economic content of the report was warmly welcomed; this will certainly facilitate gaining political support for implementation.
18. The hope was expressed that GEO may be able to give political backing to increasing the exchange of run-off data, although the sensitivity of this subject is well known.
19. It should be recognized in the implementation that there are different application areas, with diverse users.
20. Some of the requirements do not yet map into the CEOS/WMO data base because this is the first time that geo-physical parameters have appeared as a requirement. Once this is confirmed, the data base can be expanded accordingly.
21. In concluding, SIT agreed to support IGOS-P approval of the report, and will thereafter be in a position to start specific discussions with the Implementation Team on meeting the report’s requirements for space observations. (Action 12/2)
22. Dr Lawford thanked SIT for this opportunity and undertook to consider the comments which had been made.

Item 6 - Geo-hazards Theme

23. Dr Stuart Marsh presented the Geo-hazards Theme report.
24. It was unanimously agreed that the Team had produced an excellent report and in a rather short time. The innovation of submitting the draft to a peer review was considered to have been particularly appropriate and successful. The discussion, which was entirely positive, addressed the implementation arrangements and a number of specific points in the text. These are summarized below.

25. On implementation, SIT considers that it would be appropriate to give GARS the responsibility for implementing the theme report. The Chairman indicated that CEOS would be prepared to join GARS in order to strengthen the space representation. (This is not to the exclusion of national or international space agencies which may also wish to participate directly in GARS.)
26. It was suggested that the bureau being established should not be called an IGOS bureau, but rather be given a title better reflecting its functions and parentage.
27. Turning to specific points, the requirements are exactly what space agencies need. It would be helpful for the team to pull together the evidence on the need for ensuring continuity of the L-band SAR.
28. There was some concern that the science requirements were better covered than the operational side. It will be essential to harness domestic users.
29. In conclusion, SIT will support IGOS-P approval of the Theme report, and will thereafter be pleased to start detailed discussions with the team on meeting the report's space requirements. In fact, the Chairman remarked, although this was not the purpose of the present meeting, there had already been some positive offers from space agency representatives. (Action 12/3)